From:	Gray, David
To:	Cheryl Seager (Seager.Cheryl@epa.gov)
Subject:	FW: NPR/post-Harvey pollution
Date:	Friday, October 13, 2017 9:21:00 AM
Attachments:	ARKEMA 114.pdf 6ENA.Valero Refinery-Texas, L.P.09.14.17.pdf

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From: Gray, David
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 1:45 PM
To: 'Rebecca Hersher' <RHersher@npr.org>

Subject: RE: NPR/post-Harvey pollution

Rebecca,

Can you make 10 am ET work tomorrow? As I mentioned, Mr. Coleman is traveling and my colleague Nancy Grantham will join him in Washington DC for the interview.

A couple of follow up points before we go on-the-record. We will not be able to discuss details of on-going active investigations. This will be especially true for Arkema – everything we can say about it is already public. There is also a lot of 3rd party lawsuits and independent data being talked about in the news. Mr. Coleman will not be able to make public statements concerning these areas. Below is our last public statement and related data. I also attached a copy of our 114 order to the company for more information.

Regarding our follow up to odor complaints near Manchester – we will not be able to talk on-the-record regarding our investigation at Valero – other than the information that we have already made public. I included (below) two announcements regarding air quality in the area for you. I also attached our 114 order to the company for more information.

Mr. Coleman will be our on-the-record spokesman. If you have follow up questions for Ms. Enders or Mr. Blanco, we will address those questions in writing and on-background. Mr. Coleman will be able to speak to both of those topics (coordination with response partners and environmental justice/community engagement) during your time together.

Please let us know if the time works and the best contact telephone number. Mr. Coleman looks forward to speaking with you.

Best,
David

09/08/2017

Arkema Update

WASHINGTON (September 8, 2017) — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

has completed its response support to the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department and the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office for the catastrophic event at Arkema. The EPA and the TCEQ provided direct support to incident commander Michael Sims of the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department and Chief Bob Royall of the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office, who are leading a coordinated local, state, and federal effort as part of the Unified Command to control the fire at the Arkema facility in Crosby.

As a result of initial chemical fires while the facility was flooded, EPA has collected downstream surface water runoff samples at four locations outside the evacuation zone, near residential areas.

Six surface water runoff samples were collected on Friday, September 1, 2017 in the vicinity of the Arkema plant in Crosby, Texas. Surface water runoff results were less than the screening levels that would warrant further investigation. Each flood water sample was analyzed for volatile organic chemicals and semi-volatile organic chemicals likely to come from the Arkema plant. No volatile organic chemicals or semi-volatile organic chemicals were detected in the surface water runoff samples. Non-quantifiable and compounds not definitively identified are not reported. It is important to note that chemical analysis alone cannot be used as an indication of water safety. In a flood situation, there are multiple risk factors that can cause harm, industrial chemicals are only one of those risk factors. A copy of the data reports are attached.

EPA also sent its aerial surveillance aircraft to test resulting smoke from the fires at Arkema EPA's plane instrumentation is capable of measuring 78 different chemicals, including peroxides.

The Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) aircraft found no exceedances of the Texas comparison values. ASPECT conducted a screening level assessment to evaluate the unreported or undetected releases of hazardous materials or contaminants at the Arkema plant in Crosby, Texas from August 30, 2017 through September 7, 2017. The screening level results from ASPECT were compared to the ASPECT list of Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) short-term Air Monitoring Comparison Values (AMCVs) and found no exceedances of the short-term AMCVs. In addition, the ASPECT was requested to monitor for peroxide which was the source material for the fire. A copy of the ASPECT report is attached.

The TCEQ has an open investigation into the Arkema incident that will include an evaluation of any impacts due to the fires at the site. Additionally, after the final notifications are received, the TCEQ will evaluate the reported emissions events to determine compliance with applicable rules, permit provisions, and notification and reporting requirements. The TCEQ and Harris County Pollution Control are coordinating post-event monitoring, sampling, and complaint response activities. EPA has ordered Arkema to provide a detailed timeline of events and to respond within 10 days to questions about the handling of organic peroxides, which are combustible if not kept refrigerated, the amount of chemical materials, and the measures taken in advance to guard against flooding and loss of electricity. The U.S. Chemical Safety Board has initiated an investigation at the Arkema plant in Crosby.

For more information regarding Arkema, please visit:

https://www.tceq.texas.gov/news/statement/statement-on-arkema-investigation
https://response.epa.gov/sites/12353/files/Arkema_Surface_Water_VOCs_20170901.pdf
https://response.epa.gov/sites/12353/files/Arkema_Surface_Water_SVOCs_20170901.pdf
https://response.epa.gov/sites/12353/files/Arkema_ASPECT_Detections_20170907.pdf

Air Monitoring – Southeast Houston, Manchester Community

EPA has concluded that the probable source of elevated benzene and VOC readings in the Manchester community in Houston was the roof failure and spill from a light crude storage tank at the Valero Houston Refinery during Hurricane Harvey. EPA investigation into Valero Houston Refinery response and cleanup activities will continue. EPA has a long-standing practice of not disclosing specific details regarding on-going investigations. However, the complete results of our investigation will be made public upon its conclusion.

Following the review of air monitoring data from EPA's mobile unit and the City of Houston, EPA sent air specialists to the refinery on September 8 to evaluate the incident. Utilizing an infrared camera, EPA identified moderate on-going releases from the 190-foot wide tank. Valero reported to EPA that it was removing residual crude material from the tank using pumps and evaluating safe methods for removing the crumpled roof from the tank.

In addition, Valero has informed EPA that it believes it significantly underestimated the amount of VOCs and benzene released in its original report to the State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System. Based upon the volume of material in the tank at the time of the roof failure, EPA estimates that the emissions from the tank were highest immediately following the roof failure and have diminished over time due to efforts by the company to remove tank contents and apply foam suppressant to minimize emissions. Valero has informed EPA and TCEQ that they are preparing a follow up report that will indicate as substantial increase in overall reported emissions from the event.

EPA/TCEQ/CITY OF HOUSTON HARVEY UPDATE: AIR MONITORING DATA RELEASED

EPA's mobile laboratory, using the trace atmospheric gas analyzer and commonly called TAGA, is a triple quadrupole mass spectrometer system, extensively monitored the neighborhood adjacent to the Valero refinery in southeast Houston. To date, no levels of targeted toxic chemicals were detected above the Texas TCEQ Air Monitoring Comparison Values (AMCV) short-term screening levels. Copies of the TAGA results are attached.

EPA continues to conduct ambient air monitoring in Houston, and is focusing on an area of potential concern associated with reported air emissions from a Valero facility in Houston to identify the possible source of emissions. EPA has been on-scene conducting real-time air monitoring near the facility and continues to investigate complaints in the area.

EPA conducted an inspection of the Valero facility on Monday, September 5, 2017, confirmed that a tank at the facility did have a leak which occurred on August 26, 2017 from the Hurricane Harvey storm and flooding. EPA also confirmed Valero had taken action to respond to and repair the leak. Based on current site conditions including weather, repair actions by Valero, and air monitoring results, EPA's inspection could not confirm the tank was the source of the air release that led to complaints in the area immediately after the storm. EPA's air monitoring performed onsite and around the facility on September 5 does not indicate levels of concern for the community. EPA will continue air monitoring for additional sources in the area.

The Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) is a self-contained mobile laboratory capable of real-time monitoring and sampling/analysis of outdoor air or emissions. The instrumentation refers both to the analytical instrument and the mobile laboratory built

around it. The instrumentation aboard a TAGA mobile laboratory includes: A TAGA mass spectrometer/mass spectrometer (MS/MS), which provides real-time monitoring for many organic and inorganic compounds at the part-per-billion by volume (ppbv) levels or lower. An Agilent gas chromatograph/mass spectrometer (GC/MS), which analyzes volatile organic compounds at the ppbv level or lower in air samples collected in Tedlar® bags using a loop injection system. A global positioning system (GPS), which supplies accurate, real-time positional data during mobile monitoring or stationary events.

https://response.epa.gov/sites/12353/files/TAGA_Results_analyzed20170905.pdf

https://response.epa.gov/sites/12353/files/TAGA_Results_analyzed20170906.pdf

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From: Rebecca Hersher [mailto:RHersher@npr.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 12:21 PM
To: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>
Subject: [SPAM] Re: NPR/post-Harvey pollution

Thanks so much, David. I appreciate it.

Rebecca

From: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 1:13:07 PM
To: Rebecca Hersher
Subject: RE: NPR/post-Harvey pollution

Hi Rebecca,

Thanks for your emails. We are working to set up an interview with acting regional administrator Sam Coleman for you. He is traveling and I am trying to find out his availability.

David

From: Rebecca Hersher [mailto:RHersher@npr.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>
Subject: [SPAM] Re: NPR/post-Harvey pollution

Hi David,

Following up on this request; I'd also like to interview Jhana Enders from the Region 6 office -- I understand she is/was liaising with local and state authorities about air monitoring post-Harvey, and I'd like to find out more about how that works.

I would also like to interview Arturo Blanco about some of the demographic issues at play in Houston, and his office's work during and after the storm.

And I'm obviously still interested in speaking with you or someone else from the Office of External Affairs about the topics below!

Please let me know. I'm happy to reach out directly to Ms. Enders and Mr. Blanco, but I figured you'd prefer I go through you first. My deadline is the end of the week.

Thanks so much for your help,
Rebecca

From: Rebecca Hersher
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2017 3:29:47 PM
To: Gray, David
Subject: NPR/post-Harvey pollution

Hi David,

I'm working on two stories that I'm hoping you or someone from EPA Region 6 can comment on. The first is about the possible pollution released by the flooding at Arkema, and subsequent fires. The second is about odor complaints to the city of Houston during and after the floods, and information flow/collaboration between the Houston city government, TCEQ and the EPA when it comes to air and water sampling and testing.

Can I interview you or someone from your office about these topics? The stories will air nationally on one of NPR's news programs, and I would like to include EPA information in both stories, since the agency was involved in air and water testing in the city of Houston, and around the Arkema site.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Best,
Rebecca

Rebecca Hersher | Reporter, Science Desk, National Public Radio | rhersher@npr.org | 202-513-2127 (o) I 603-494-3213 (c)